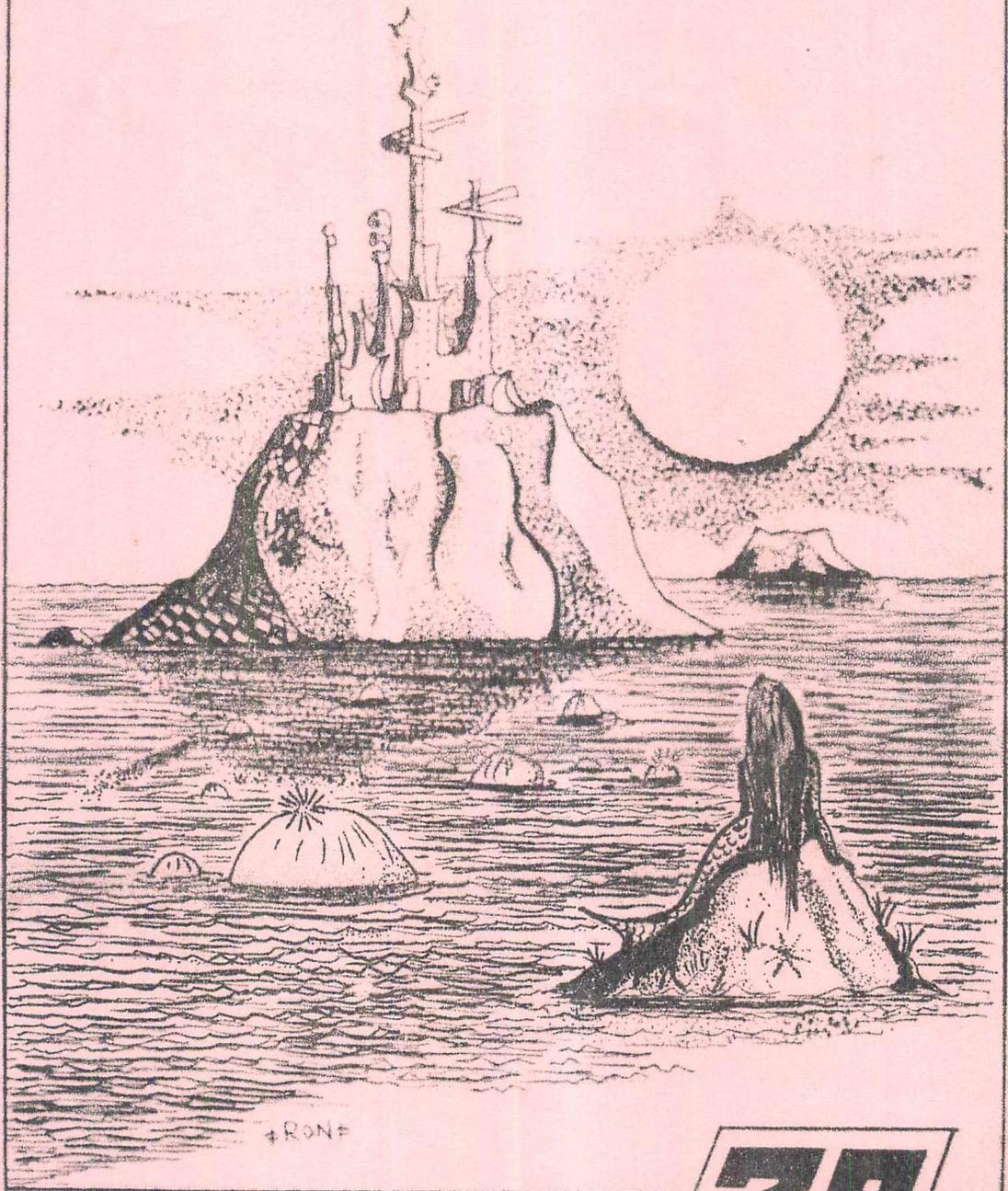


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# Vector



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\* Next issue - March. All letters of comment, reviews, etc. should be sent to me not later than February 5th.

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# EDITORIAL

A belated Happy New Year to all Members. This issue should have been out in mid-December but after a series of hold-ups this issue should reach you about the last week in January. Together with this issue you will find the first issue of TANGENT, the BSFA's new magazine which will be devoted entirely to fiction. Also enclosed are:-

- 1) Library supplement No 2.
- 2) Hugo Nomination form.

If you don't receive any of these then drop me a postcard and I'll send you the missing items.

## NOMINATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR'S COMMITTEE

This year we actually have more than one person nominated for certain posts so we are certain to get a committee that is keen, if the persons nominated show willingness to stand. The following nominations were received by the Secretary:-

Secretary: Joreen Parker (nominated by Charles Platt)

Graham Bullock (nominated by Pete Weston)

Treasurer: Charles Winstone (nominated by Gill Adams)

Vice-Chairman: Archie Mercer (nominated by Ken Cheslin)

Publications Officer: Charles Platt (nominated by Langdon Jones)

Roger Feyton (nominated by Rod Kilner)

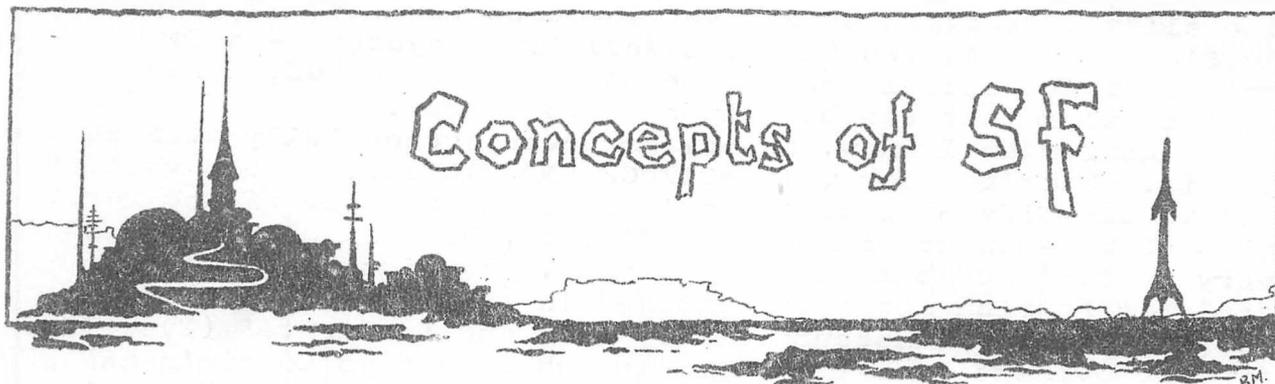
In accordance with the Constitution, those people nominated should confirm their willingness to stand before the next VECTOR. Also, secondors for each of the nominations are required. Some of these I have already received and they will be published, complete with those yet to come, in the next VECTOR.

## FANZINE LIBRARY

A new BSFA department will be operating in the near future. This is the idea of Chris Priest and is mainly for the benefit of new members who have never heard of, or seen, a fanzine. The idea is, that a new member who wishes to have information on fanzines, writes to the person operating this service and obtains copies of fanzines he thinks he may be interested in. He then returns them after he has read them.

To get this service started, we would appreciate any fanzines you don't want (preferably recent ones). They should be sent to Mike Turner (54 Park Hill Road, Harborne, Birmingham 17) who will be operating this service.

(Continued on page 33)



by

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JIM ENGLAND

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## INTRODUCTION

Science fiction means different things to different people. To some it is a mere form of escapism, a way of passing time. To some, a kind of fiction they prefer to all others, without knowing why. To some, an interest giving them access to the microcosmic world of 'fandom', - it fades often, amid the brightness of some social whirl. To still others, it is the kind of fiction that produced in them, as teenagers, the first stirrings of a desire to understand and get involved in science, by appealing to their 'sense of wonder' - it remains for them a unique literary genre, capable of appealing to both the intellect and the emotions; a field with great potentialities that deserves to be taken seriously and might one day be taken as seriously by scientists as by literary critics.

It is a common fallacy that one needs to define a thing in order to discuss it profitably. Scientists make no attempt to define many of the things they discuss and no attempt will be made to define science fiction here. Damon Knight in *IN SEARCH OF WONDER* said that science fiction "means what we point to when we say it", and by this operational definition proved he was no fool.

Some science fiction authors and editors are fond of saying that many of the things we are now familiar with were prognosticated by SF authors years in advance. The atomic bomb is often quoted as an example. The submarine and artificial satellite are others. The communication satellite was prognosticated by Arthur C Clarke as long ago as 1945, and the inventor of the flexible submarine tanker actually got his idea direct from Frank Herbert's *UNDER PRESSURE* (*THE DRAGON IN THE SEA*). What seems to be forgotten is that, with very few exceptions, SF writers and readers have done little or nothing to make such prognostications come true. Furthermore, a cynic could argue that if one makes enough prognostications, a few of them are almost certain to come true, and there is cause for surprise, not in the fact that so many of them have come true but in

the fact that so few of them have. Nevertheless, if we were to examine all the concepts of SF over the past few decades, we would surely find a few needles in the speculative haystack - a few concepts that are useful and can be shown to be useful, a few prognostications that can be helped to come true.

As far as I know, no-one has ever successfully attempted to do this. Patrick Moore, in SCIENCE AND FICTION, made a valiant attempt to classify SF into 'types' and sort out some of the worst examples of non-science in science fiction, but the above book is now very 'dated' and has numerous faults. For instance, the difficulties Patrick Moore encountered in trying to divide SF up into scientifically 'inaccurate' (Type I) and 'accurate' (Type II) fiction are evident from the beginning when he says Godwin's *MAN IN THE MOON* is a borderline case between Type I and II and Kepler's book Type II, because "he was quite prepared to believe in demons." If we allow this, we must call all SF 'accurate' that does not involve deliberate introduction of ideas which the author knows to be false. Again, without actually saying it, Patrick Moore implies that 'good' SF can only rarely contain unsound science, which most SF enthusiasts would surely agree to be incorrect. His admiration of Jules Verne leads him to devote 19 pages to "The Genius of Verne" whose literary ability he praises, and only 7 to "H G Wells". Throughout the book he makes remarks about the impossibility of this or that SF concept, without ever engaging in discussion or explanation as to why the concepts are impossible, and often his ideas are very conservative.

Arthur C Clarke, in PROFILES OF THE FUTURE is far from conservative. In fact, he is brilliantly imaginative and throws caution to the winds. Moreover, he does not (as Patrick Moore does) tend to 'talk down' to his readers. But his book, sub-titled "An Enquiry into the Limits of the Possible", does not attempt to examine all SF concepts; it restricts itself to a few major ones.

The importance of long-term forecasting and 'planning' is becoming more and more apparent, especially when plans involve vast expenditure. For instance, not long ago the British newspapers were full of accounts of the Buchanan report ("Traffic in Towns", published by the Stationery Office) whose recommendations were accepted by the Government 'in principle'. With its references to multi-level cities and moving pavements, the report was described as sounding "like a piece of science fiction". The NEW SCIENTIST recently published a long series of articles on "1984" in which professional scientists attempted to forecast developments over the next 20 years. Scientists of the Rand Corporation of California are currently engaged in "long-range prediction studies" with a similar object.

Such examples could be multiplied. Why is it then, that at a time when people are becoming predisposed to look on SF favourably and to expect it to cater for their 'sense of wonder', its scientific content and predictive value appear to be diminishing rather than increasing?

In theory, the task of a science fiction magazine editor should be more difficult than that of a literary magazine editor, because there are more criteria of 'suitability' to be applied in the former case. A story can have both literary and scientific

worth. In practice, the latter seems nowadays to go by the board, and we get stories of the Ray Bradbury type, full of emotion, padded out with SF concepts 'borrowed' from other authors. Some authors (e.g. John Lynton) even seem to have a hatred and fear of science. Perhaps, in view of the way science is currently taught, it's surprising that there aren't more. Scientific gadget stories are 'out' but literary gimmick stories are 'in'. The same old SF concepts are used again and again, authors seldom bothering to discriminate the bad from the good. Editors strive for 'respectability' and in so doing sacrifice originality for slickness and literary sophistication.

The oft-repeated statement that we are living in a 'Scientific Age' is completely false. 'Technological' maybe, but 'Scientific' never. Our culture is dominated by a literary-legal-military tradition that shows itself every way we turn; even in the field of SF.

In what follows, SF concepts will be examined (I hope) with only the regard for this tradition that it deserves, and the result should (again, I hope) be interesting to those 'fans' who claim there is "nothing left to discuss" in science fiction.

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## PART 1

### THE MIND AND BRAIN

The human brain is the most complex item of organic machinery in the known universe. A lot has been written about the 'sense of wonder' in SF and people have often claimed that the excitement and wonder is not what it was 'in the old days'. I think that two factors are involved.

Firstly, one's capacity for wonder decreases with age, and so the SF one reads now seems less wonderful than it was 'in the old days'. Secondly, on the average, SF is less wonderful (in the sense of 'sense of wonder' - stirring) than it used to be.

Be that as it may, the stories that have stirred my sense of wonder most have been those dealing with very grandiose concepts. And what can be a more grandiose concept than that somewhere in the universe there may be races with brains as far advanced over ours as ours are over the apes (or further)? If such races exist, what are they like? Are they descended from animals of a type Earth has never known; are they humanoid; are they part animal and part robot; silicon-based; giant brains in tanks; composed of 'pure energy'; 'pure thought'; or something even more fantastic? In what ways would such brains be superior to ours? Would they simply have more brain cells, or brain cells different in kind? Would they be more rapid in operation - capable of doing a human intelligence test in a flash - or more ponderous and powerful - capable of deeper comprehension and understanding - or both? Would they have abilities of which we cannot conceive? We are nowhere near realising the potentialities of our own brains, so how can we hope to guess the abilities of brains superior to ours?

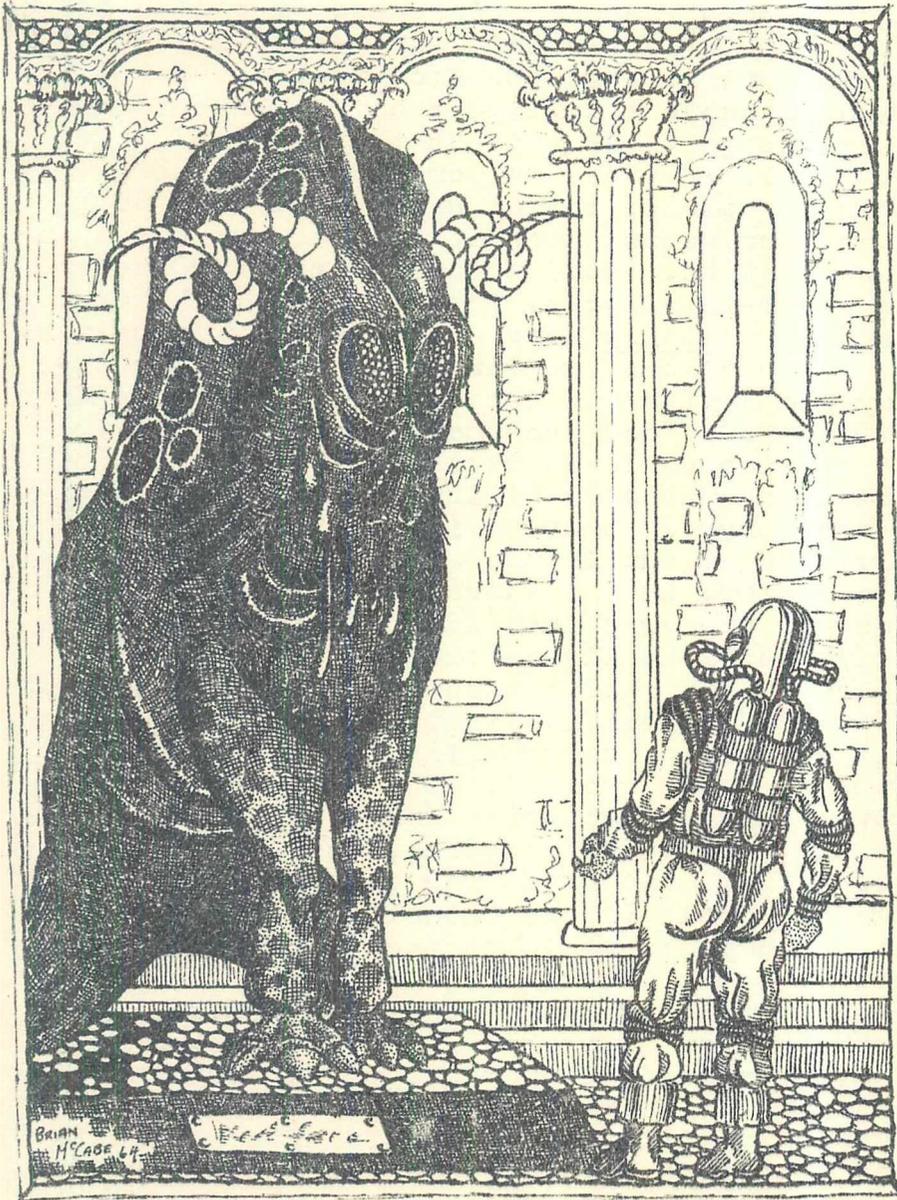
These were the problems of which I became aware at the age of ten, when I first read *LAST AND FIRST MEN* by Olaf Stapledon. This book is, in many ways, implausible and pessimistic. For instance, Stapledon allowed many millions of years to elapse before Man reached the stage of interstellar flight. But it is also a masterpiece, and left a profound impression on my mind. Years later, when I had the good fortune to attend a lecture given by Stapledon, the impression persisted to such an extent that I could not get rid of a vague feeling of surprise that he should look so 'human'.

Stapledon's first 'Giant Brains' were man-made (i.e. devised by the inferior brain of Man). The later ones were devised by the 'Giant Brains' themselves. All of them were organic - they were not mere computers but genuine super-intellecets. This gives rise to the thought: how could a human brain devise something superior to itself? It seems fantastic, but it is not necessary to understand a thing in order to make it, and the idea is not beyond the bounds of possibility. Granted that it were possible, we would have to admit the possibility that an ascending series of 'Giant Brains' in order of intellect could be created, approaching some sort of God-like limit after an indefinite time. Stapledon did not pursue this line of thought but allowed the Brains to be destroyed and made it clear that, despite their enormously superior intellects, they were inferior to Man in not possessing a 'moral sense'. This I found very disappointing - a form of anti-intellectualism. Later, I came to think that Stapledon must have been confused about the meaning of a 'moral sense'. For a human to regard a 'Giant Brain' as deficient in this respect would be like a bat regarding humans as inferior in not possessing built-in radar. Surely the real future must hold Giant Brains - maybe not organic, but superior in every intellectual quality we can name, and leaving only the emotions and sentiments as our exclusive, non-utilitarian preserve?

About the same time as this, I read H G Wells' *WAR OF THE WORLDS*, but Wells' Martians were not of Giant Brain calibre: their paucity of intellect was shown by the fact that they were killed by terrestrial bacteria.

I was about sixteen when I read Eric Frank Russell's "Hobbyist". The plot of the story (roughly) is that a man lands on the planet of a far-distant star, looking for spaceship fuel. He enters a sort of huge museum full of specimens of life-forms from all over the universe. The 'being' in charge of the museum turns out to be 'a column of radiance' who is responsible for the planting of life on Earth and an unspecified number of other planets. The largeness of this concept (i.e. that life on Earth might be simply an experiment conducted by a member, or members, of some super-advanced race) left a tremendous impression. I have come across the same idea many times since, but I cannot think of a better story using it. The story had an unforgettable 'anything-goes' exciting atmosphere about it.

The next landmark, I think, was Clifford Simak's "Limiting Factor" - another story guaranteed to appeal to anyone's sense of wonder. The plot, briefly, is that a spaceship crew come across a planet completely roofed-over with metal! They penetrate the metal roof and find that the whole planet is covered with machinery to a



depth of 20 miles. They come to the conclusion that the original inhabitants of the planet set themselves the task of solving some problem of awe-inspiring complexity and made the whole surface of the planet into a computer in an effort to solve it. When the computer reached a height of twenty miles they were faced with the 'limiting factor' - further extensions would cause the computer to be crushed under its own weight. In desperation, they finally left the planet, in search of a larger one.

Another concept almost as awe-inspiring as that of super intellect is the concept of the 'Galactic Library' - a huge storehouse of all the knowledge in the Galaxy. Clifford D Simak's "Jackpot" is built around this idea. It can be compared

with the idea of a 'World Brain' advocated by H G Wells. When you consider the amount of scientific literature being published yearly and try to extrapolate a little into the future, the need for something along the lines of a 'World Brain' is apparent, but the amount of work involved in its creation would be tremendous. The mind simply boggles at the idea of a 'Galactic Library'.

The above are just a few of the stories that have been written about super-intellecets (natural or artificial) - I am aware that there have been many more. Others I have liked include "Visiting Amoeba" by Brian Aldiss, "It's a Good Life" by Jerome Bixby, "The Touch of Your Hand" by Theodore Sturgeon, GUARDIANS OF TIME by Poul Anderson, "Neighbour" by Clifford Simak and "By His Bootstraps" by Robert Heinlein. But very few such stories have gone into detail to the extent that Stapledon did with his 'Giant Brains'. Often the physical nature of the creature with super-intellect is merely hinted at in "Hobbyist" or not described at all, as in GUARDIANS OF TIME, and this seems a great pity. The SF writers, of

course, know what they are doing. The reader's sense of wonder is often stirred much more by what is left unsaid, or merely hinted at, than by what is described in detail. But the fact that the imagination tends to fail when super intelligent beings have to be described, constitutes a challenge to SF writers that I would like to see them take up. After all, if there are creatures in the universe more advanced than ourselves, the odds are that more of them will be one million or more years ahead of us than are one thousand or fewer years ahead of us. Despite this fact, for every story involving plausible super-intellecets, there must be a hundred or more describing aliens just a little more advanced than ourselves. In fact, as often as not, these aliens are virtually undistinguishable from ourselves. They speak with the accents of Americans and with the vocabulary of Americans of not much more than 100 IQ. The least the authors of such stories could do would be to consult the writings of people like Bertrand Russell, of IQ around 170, before writing dialogue. There are very few stories in which this quality of high IQ is successfully brought out in the dialogue of aliens.

An interesting question, in the above context, is whether the beings in the universe who are very much advanced than ourselves will prove to be as far advanced mentally as they are technologically. If automation and the building of advanced computers are common features of most advanced alien civilisations, it may be that only a few races go to the trouble of controlling their own evolutions (i.e. improving their own brains). The majority may be content to stay at the level natural evolution has brought them to, leaving all technological and scientific research, as well as all routine work, to machines. Thus, most races may eventually reach a stage in which the surrounding world (their entertainments, means of transport, etc.) is about as comprehensible to them as a TV set is to a chimpanzee. Thereafter, there would be no progress (except for the machines); in fact, there would probably be regression. This could explain why the Earth (as far as we know) has never been visited by, or contacted by, advanced alien races throughout its multi-million years of existence. Another explanation is that highly advanced races invariably kill themselves off after a finite time, through wars or accidents. We have only to look at our own world, poised year after year on the threshold of racial suicide, to realise that a member of a very much more advanced race would have the means of racial suicide virtually at his fingertips. Even if psychopathic members of such a race cropped up only once in a thousand years, this would suffice to bring about the race's extinction, in the long run. Insofar as the fact that we have never been visited by aliens can be said to prove anything, it surely proves that faster-than-light travel is impossible; despite the above possibilities.

Besides being intellectually superior to us, or in place of this, the aliens in SF have often been depicted as having other superiorities. Most often these have taken the form of psi-abilities. It has been assumed that aliens will be telepathic, capable of psychokinesis or teleportation, able to disappear at will, to travel in time at will, to change their shape at will (i.e. to be polymorphallastic) and so on. Whilst there is no proof that such things are impossible there is very little evidence that they are

possible, and I think that the assumption that they are, very often represents a failure of imagination on the part of authors. The whole psi field may eventually prove to be a blind alley, and future generations may look back on the present craze for psi stories with surprise. The same applies, of course, to psi stories written about humans. Since no single psionic ability has yet been proven to exist, it seems a bit ridiculous to postulate the existence of dozens of them and make these bases of countless thousands of SF stories. Some very good psi stories have, of course, been written, but the vast majority are just poor imitations of these few and there are far too many of them. Clifford Simak is an example of an author who has written good stories involving most of the hypothetical psi faculties. "Idiot's Crusade" involves both psychokinesis and the ability to control the thoughts of others. (This idea seems to be used much less often than the idea of telepathy involving simple reception and transmission). His "Death Scene" is about precognition. (This again is written about far less often than the other psi faculties). TIME IS THE SIMPLEST THING involves both telepathy and teleportation. But precognition is surely almost as implausible as physical time travel. As for psychokinesis, I have often wondered why parapsychologists are so fond of using dice in attempts to demonstrate its existence or non-existence. Evidence based on the fall of dice can never amount to more than a probability, whereas if they could produce a single individual who was able to (say) depress the scale of a balance by mental effort alone (and whenever required to do so), very few sceptics would remain. Balances can be made exceedingly delicate nowadays and the energy required to make them register is very much less than that required to turn dice.

Quite apart from stories about telepathic humans and telepathic aliens, a few stories have been written about telepathic machines. Isaac Asimov, for instance, in "Liar!", envisaged a tele-



pathic robot being produced by 2021. In "McIlvaine's Star", August Derleth envisaged a man making a machine for telepathic communication with the insect-like inhabitants of an approaching star. The language-translation machine, so often used by SF authors to get over the language-barrier, in 'first contacts' often turns out to be a telepathic machine. In "Millenium" and other stories by E B Cole, the idea of a 'mental amplifier communicator' is used. If the idea that telepathic machines might be feasible is accepted, it's surprising that SF authors haven't written stories in which machines have other psi faculties. Why not have precognitive machines and machines that can teleport and practise psychokinesis, for example?

The way in which humans become telepathic in stories, or come to possess other psi faculties, varies considerably. Sometimes the humans are mutants, sometimes telepathy is induced by drugs, sometimes by radiation, sometimes it just 'happens'. In "The Conspirators" by James White, the crew and a number of experimental animals on board an interstellar ship all suddenly become telepathic and find their intelligence has increased. No explanation of 'the change' is given. In "The New Wine" by John Christopher, telepathic powers are induced in all human offspring by means of a mechanical device. Unfortunately, the newly created telepathic humans all die at puberty, so the human race becomes extinct.

The assumption that telepathy is possible also poses numerous problems, many of which are hinted at in SF. Would a telepathic human be able to communicate with all men or with only some of them? Would he be able to communicate with apes or lower animals, or with intelligent aliens? Would he be able to receive and transmit 'at will' or only on certain occasions (and possibly sometimes against his will)? Finally, how far would his telepathic messages travel? Would he be able to vary their 'intensity'? Most stories limit telepathic powers to some extent, but a few have been written about aliens (and humans of the future) who are able to communicate with all their race simultaneously. Gordon R Dickson's "Listen" is an example, and involves aliens who cannot leave their planet because of symbiosis. The limitations upon other psi faculties in stories are seldom explained. Is the difficulty of psychokinesis, for example, proportional to the weight of the object being moved? When the characters in stories are free to teleport, willy-nilly, not only through space, but backwards and forwards in time and to 'parallel worlds' or 'other dimensions' (as in "Star, Bright!" by Mark Clifton, and stories by Alfred Bester, Jonathan Burke, etc.), the result may be entertaining but most readers surely feel a bit cheated by the absence of limitations.

Turning away from the subject of psi faculties and aliens, what other types of stories have been written about the mind and brain? A large number have been written about future societies full of moronic or otherwise abnormal people. "Beyond Bedlam" by Wyman Guin is about a schizophrenic society of the future in which people are obliged by law to take drugs which inhibit emotion and give them two personalities, 'the hyperalter, or prime ego, and the hypoalter, the alternate ego'. The idea of this is to prevent wars. "The Feeling of Power" by Isaac Asimov is about a society in which people have virtually forgotten how to think because all thought is left to

computers.

Another common type of story involves the genius or methods of artificially increasing intelligence. "Flowers for Algernon" by Daniel Keyes is about a man with IQ 68 who has an operation which results in the 'tripling' of his intelligence. Unfortunately, the effect is not permanent because: "Artificially increased intelligence deteriorates at a rate of time directly proportional to the quantity of the increase." (Algernon-Gordon Effect). The authors who refer to the 'doubling' and 'tripling' of intelligence do not seem to realise that such phrases are meaningless, but it is already known that intelligence can be increased and so it will be surprising if we do not learn to increase it further in the future. The idea that intelligence could be increased using drugs, however, seems improbable. The idea is quite common. In "Compound B" by D H Fink, a drug is discovered which selectively raises the IQ of negroes but not of whites. In "The Chicken or the Egghead" by Frank Fenton, a drug lowers the IQ of intellectuals to the 'average' level, making them less self critical and more contented. The most common means of increasing IQ apart from drugs and mutation are brain operations and forms of psycho-therapy. Occasionally, as with telepathy, the increase just 'happens'. In "Machine Made" by J T McIntosh, a moronic charwoman called Rose, who cleans the offices of the 'Electronics Building', is instructed to make a device which attaches to her head. She is promptly transformed into an intelligent woman capable of doing advanced mental arithmetic. Similar type stories are "Idiot Solvant" by Gordon R Dickson and "Elimination" by J W Campbell. Geniuses also occur in Jules Verne's "City of the Sahara" and K Tsiolkovsky's "Beyond the Planet Earth". Once or twice I have come across the idea that the only thing to do with geniuses is kill them. In "Balance" by John Christopher, for instance, a geneticist succeeds in developing a method whereby his daughter becomes a polymath genius. The 'hero' of the story kills her off for fear that she and her descendants would come to tyrannise the human race.

When you come to think of it, a vast area of psychology still remains unexplored by SF writers. Quite apart from psi faculties and intelligence, there are numerous known aspects of human personality about which hardly any SF stories have been written. Creativity, for instance, on which a great deal of research is being done at present, has vast possibilities for SF. Even the common human personality traits like aggressiveness, curiosity, extroversion, have possibilities. (Continued on Page 14)



# THE AUTHOR'S LOT

## NO. 5

### ED MACKIN

The second thing you will all want to know is what brought me into the racket in the first place. Well, friends, I have been an addict of SF since the early pink cover days, when the stuff was more or less smuggled into the country as ballast or machinery packing. I see Eric Frank Russell got his fix from Woolworth's. They must have kept it awful damned secret, the dogs! Mine came from the Anvil Bookshop in Brunswick Road, Liverpool. You could get quarterlies in those days, too, and they were really something.

Initially, I kicked off contributing to the non-paying type of magazine (it looks like I'm still doing it!) short bits of verse and odds and ends that had no connection with SF; but a great deal in common with my fellow malcontents who were rather more than left of left, politically. As I remember it, we wanted to change the world or something. I still don't know how we failed except that the circulation was decidedly rosey on most of the publications concerned. You know, I shall always regret that I missed the parish magazines. I am sure that more could have been done from that end.

The war came next; but nothing startling happened from the literary point of view except that someone lent me a much-thumbed copy of LADY C. I thought it was a right carry-on even for a member of the upper crust. One other thing that happened was that I had a piece of blistering satire returned from a Forces newspaper with a very realistic gallows, complete with dangling noose, drawn on the back of the last page. It really was a helluva good drawing. I went around for days with a feeling of constriction.

I continued writing short stories, articles, poems and what-have-you after the war, but it was a long time before I drifted into writing SF, and I had a great deal of help and advice from E C Tubb, and later John Carnell. I am still only a part-timer, and I am always astounded to learn that someone or other actually earns his living writing SF. I'll bet there are unicorns, too. I just bet there are!

Yes, well, the first thing you will all want to know is what happened to the beginning of this article...and here it is. Actually, I thought the first thing you would all want to know (maybe not all. Some of you, no doubt, will have given up the unequal struggle and drifted off into other parts of the magazine)

might have been phrased as "Who the hell is this character, anyway?" A fair question, friends, and a difficult one - which is why I shelved it and propose to shelve it further.

Having, I think, satisfactorily settled that little point we can get back to the author's lot. Generally speaking, it is a not too unhappy one (although I agree that there must be deep, frungian reasons for his addiction to SF, the swine! Something certainly to set the nutcrackers in a twitter.) particularly when he succeeds in producing something that satisfies him or, better still, satisfies some editor or other.

There are a few writers, of course, who aim at the higher things. At least they hold their mouths as though they do. Needless to say, I am not of this august company. The chief thing, as far as I am concerned, is to entertain. Anything over and above this is there, I do assure you, with wicked intent: to stir things up, in fact, heh, heh!

As to the actual writing, I gather that most writers, nowadays, type direct on. I prefer to rough the thing out first in longhand. The snag with this method is that I can't always read what I've written. In fact, a cousin of mine swears that there is only one worse calligrapher in the known world, and that's his doctor. When he tenders a prescription he takes the precaution of acquainting the chemist with his symptoms, presumably so that he won't make up something exotic like arsenic suspended in a solution of prussic acid and snake-bite serum. Then he waits twenty-four hours before taking the stuff to give the police time to get to him should there have been a slip-up of this nature.

I really don't know why he bothers because he always ends up pouring the deadly concoction down the kitchen sink. I should think he has about the most medicated and germ-free waste pipe in the whole district!

Getting back to writing, I've tried using a tape recorder but this was an unqualified flop. Apart from the er-ers, blimeys and blast-its, there were thirty-nine apparently unrelated bits of dialogue, including a demand for more coffee which was not well received. The trouble with this method, of course, is that the thoughts are so used to the old path down the arm and out through a fairly uncomplicated writing instrument, to wit: a badly-savaged ball pen, that when any other exit is presented to them they tend to dig themselves in or hide back there in the remoter fastnesses of the brain. So, as I say, I use a ball pen. It's a particular type of ball pen - the automatic kind, and if you drop it on its little spring-loaded button, it bounces six inches where my skilled hand waits to catch it, and drop it again. Very diverting.

I don't know if this has given you any insight into the author's lot, which varies, naturally, with the author concerned and bears a direct relationship to his energy and talent. If he lacks



either, or has a full-time job and a telly that works, he is bucking almost insuperable odds, although he might just make it at that - which is what I am trying to do.

Ed Mackin

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THE CONCEPTS OF SF - Part 1 by Jim England (Continued from Page 11)

Imagine the consequences if just one of the traits were increased to an extent previously unknown. Stories written along these lines would, in my opinion, be far better than the majority of those written about psi. Psychology is a science still in its infancy. Is it too much to hope that the imaginings of SF writers could play a part in helping it to grow up?

Jim England

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SMALL-ADS (Free to Members)

WANTED ! WANTED ! WANTED ! One copy of Walter Gillings' Fantasy Review No 2 (April/May 1947) to complete set for binding. John Gunn, Queens Hotel, Matlock, Derbyshire.

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WANTED - the following:-

Bretnor: MODERN SF. Coward-McCann 1953.  
Davenport: INQUIRY INTO SF. ? 1953.  
Green: INTO OTHER WORLDS. ? 1952.  
Knight: IN SEARCH OF WONDER. Advent Press 1956.  
Moore: SCIENCE AND FICTION. Harrap 1957.  
Clarke: THE TALE OF THE FUTURE.  
Roskowitz: EXPLORERS OF THE INFINITE.  
? : PILGRIMS OF OUTER SPACE. 1947.  
de Camp: SF HANDBOOK. Hermitage 1953.  
Bailey: PILGRIMS THRU TIME AND SPACE. Argus 1947.  
Donald H Tuck: A HANDBOOK OF SF & FANTASY. 1959.  
Angelo Oggiano, Via Nicastro 3, Rome, Italy.

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GRAHAM M HALL, 57 Church Street, Tewkesbury, Glos. regrets that DOUBT 2 or its successor, whether it be ? or any other title, will now be delayed until Easter 1965, as he is in financial difficulties spending as much time, energy and money as he is on the incomparably complete Bibliography of 30 years of Robert Bloch, with an introduction by Samuel A Peebles, containing listings chronological and by magazine. The end-product will be available in this country from sole agents Fantast (Medway) Limited, soon after Christmas.

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WANTED - Poul Anderson's STAR WAYS and VIRGIN PLANET in Avalon editions with dust wrappers. Rog Peyton, 77 Grayswood Park Road, Quinton, Birmingham 38.



# DR. PERISTYLE'S COLUMN

NOW WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE?

RON BENNETT: An important percentage of the country's population is extremely enthusiastic about sport. Do you think that the appeal of science fiction would be greatly widened if SF stories were written which depended greatly on a sporting background? Why?

DR PERISTYLE: Certainly the great Martian Shove-Ha'Penny novel has yet to be written. Although Games Theory once cropped up pretty frequently in SF stories, games themselves rarely appear. At an age when my mind was as unformed as those of most of my readers, I recall reading stories that attempted - generally disastrously - to mingle baseball with SF. A more recent effort may be found in BRE GALAXY No 11, Donald Colvin's "Half Past Alligator". GALAXY also published James Gunn's "Open Warfare" (BRE 19), which is about golf. It may be that Gold, then GALAXY's editor, thought, as evidently SKYRACK's editor does, that this move might net a few more readers. Perhaps the idea failed at the time; now, however, it might be more successful. How pleasing to find in ANALOG, instead of the everlasting psi, a four-part interstellar cricket serial - "Foundation and Umpire" perhaps.

GAVIN DIXON: Why does Cyril Kornbluth collaborate with other writers (Pohl, Merril, etc.)? Is it because he has no ideas for plots and supplies the words for other writers who have too many or is it that he can't write himself and just supplies the brainwork?

DR PERISTYLE: The past tense would be more appropriate to your question, since Kornbluth is dead; so would a little respect. A mixture of motives can move a writer to seek a collaborator (J H Lawrence often felt the need for one, for all his independence of thought). In science fiction, there is a genuine division of being which is expressed even in its label: there is fiction and there is science, and the difficulty is to reconcile the two in one oeuvre. For this reason, SF should be a prime field for collaboration; in fact it is not, and what we get instead is authors with split minds, such as Anderson, Clarke or Aldiss, who lay the emphasis sometimes on the one side, sometimes on the other. THE CITY AND THE STARS and PRELUDE TO SPACE must be the widest span between science and fiction any writer has encompassed within the medium. For all that, there have been several SF collaborations, the Pohl-Kornbluth duet being perhaps the most stable as well as the most successful, although the

older generation of readers will recall Bando Binder. Outside SF, the Goncourt Brothers were outstanding; they seem to have been almost telepathic, and could finish each other's sentences correctly. The survivor was lost without his brother. It would be unfair to say as much about Pohl, but that he has largely gone over to editing is not without significance. He and Kornbluth (the latter under a variety of pen-names) produced many excellent short stories under their own steam. Kornbluth's collection THE MINDWORK, published in this country, is recommended.

CHARLES FLATT: Do you believe in a 'sense of wonder'? If so, what is it? If not, why not?

DR PERISTYLE: I believe in the sense of wonder. This is a stock item in every fathead's creed. What about a sense of terror or a sense of isolation or a love of knowledge? Do not these play as active a part in one's enjoyment of SF as the sense of wonder? However, since the question is about the latter, I will come to it directly, if reluctantly.

'Sense of wonder' is a cant term used by SF readers for a loose bundle of emotions, generally unformulated and therefore beyond analysis. These emotions include nostalgia; the sense of wonder looks back to the tyro days of neofandom when the reader was bowled over by every story he read. These emotions do not include judgment; because of its backward-looking aspect, the sense of wonder syndrome prevents the reader accepting any form of writing he did not encounter in his early reading - hence the indifference to the marvellous stories of J G Ballard. By this, it can be seen that the sense of wonder is an enemy of originality, and thus of all living SF.

I am aware that in circles beyond fandom the phrase 'sense of wonder' is not used in any loaded way. They employ it to mean an intelligent response to this excellent planet on which we have been granted so brief a stay.

CHARLES WINSTONE: Do you believe in 'ghosts'?

DR PERISTYLE: You put ghosts in quotes, perhaps to indicate your own doubts, perhaps to indicate a species of spirit slightly different from quoteless ghosts. I believe in ghosts without quotes, the common or haunted grange kind. I also believe in all the other sorts, the minor hauntings that seem always at our elbow, the gremlins, the faceless things that formulate Finagle's Laws, the hidden promptings, Lady Luck, chance, and so on. My world is very far from the orthodox swept-clean life that orthodox science would have me lead. And since you have invited this burst of autobiography, I will go on to say that there are over two million angels on my pinhead. Life is an affair of unseen presences; in every conversation, the unspoken words are the important ones.

But those ordinary ghosts - oh yes, I believe ever since I ran into one as a small boy, in the unlit space between our side gate and stables, late one October afternoon. There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio - please send three more Joan the Wads.

# GENERAL CHUNTERING

by  
KEN SLATER

The old magazine heroes seem to be showing new life... there was the recent RETURN OF THE SHADOW, and now Doc Savage makes a triple return. Published by Bantam at 45¢, the three titles are THE MAN OF BRONZE, METEOR MENACE, and THE THOUSAND-HEADED MAN - published in 1933 and 1934 originally - and they have all been imported by Transworld at 2/6 each...10¢ cheaper than the American price. I'm informed that they are a 'trial' run both sides of the water, and that if the demand - presumably judged on the call for old 'Doc Savage' mags and the limited number of Kenneth Robeson titles which were cheaply published in hard covers and all of which now command high prices - expected is realised, more titles will follow.

Another old-time hero riding...well, swinging from bough to bough is more appropriate...once again is Tarzan, in TARZAN AND THE SILVER GLOBE. There seems to be some doubt as to the legality of this Tarzan, and the position is being studied from many viewpoints...in the jungle of the copyright laws, no clear game trail exists down which authors may travel to the drinking place (or killing ground) for other people's characters. At least, in the USA, it appears that it has never been adjudicated in a court whether, when the copyright on part of a series of titles expires, the central character in the series is in the public domain or not. According to the position that Burroughs Inc. will doubtless adopt, the fact that copyright in a great many 'Tarzan' titles is still invested in Burroughs Inc. protects the character 'Tarzan' and also the other characters in those books. Gold Star Books, who have published the first of the new series, obviously think otherwise. There will be an awful lot riding on this, you can bet. Walt Disney will be watching with a certain amount of anxiety, for although he might be able to win by making some Tarzan cartoon films, just think of what he could stand to lose! The other title in 'The New Series' is TARZAN AND THE CAVE CITY, which I've not yet seen. The two titles are written by 'Barton Werper', and the name Werper was used by Burroughs for a villain in TARZAN AND THE JEWELS OF OPAR. The first title owes considerable to that story, also. The 'new' twist is that La of Opar turns out to be a spy from Venus.....

After that terrible fauz pas I pulled in the F(1)E Oct-Nov catalogue I'm being a bit wary of reports on personal happenings, but for the record I have a letter informing of the death of an 'H Beam Piper', the death being reported as occurring on November 9th, according to the NEW YORK TIMES of 19th November, according to my informant.

Other new US paperbacks...THE REIGN OF WIZARDRY by Jack Williamson (Lancer 50¢), original copyright 1940 by Street & Smith, a story of the overthrow of the wizard king Minos by the Greek Theseus...plenty of magic and swordplay...THE KILLING MACHINE by

Jack Vance (Berkeley 50¢)...this one jumped the magazine publication and will not now appear in the mags...it is a continuation of THE STAR KING saga of Kirth Gersen in his search for the five men who killed his family. In this book he catches up with and slays the second of the five, so it would seem that at least three more in this series can be expected....Ballantine contribute a pb edition of Anthony Burgess' THE WANTING SEED at 60¢...and James White's collection, DEADLY LITTER at 50¢ ("Grapeliner", "The Ideal Captain", "The Lights Outside the Windows" and the title yarn). From Belmont: MASTERS OF SCIENCE FICTION, 7 stories 'never before in paperback', at 50¢...stories are "Service Call" by Philip K Dick, "Path of Darkness" by M. C. Pease, "Early Bird" by E. F. Russell, "Forgive Us Our Debts" by Lester Del Rey, "The Green Thumb" by Foul Anderson, "The Day of the Boomer Dukes" by Fred Pohl and "The Final Figure" by Sam Merwin Jr. Well, there are no previous publication credits given anywhere so far as I can see, but I certainly recognise some of these yarns from periodical publication and to the general public the fine distinction between a 'paperback' and a 'magazine' or 'periodical' is almost non-existent. Also from Belmont OLD SCIENCE FICTION by Frank Belknap Long, same stringer, but previous copyright acknowledgement is made for three yarns in this book, "The Horror from the Hills", "The Flame of Life" and "The Giant in the Forest". ...50¢ that one. Gold Medal: THE DAY NEW YORK WENT DRY by Charles Einstein...and that dry means a drought, not the old prohibition theme...40¢. Dell: SHOCK II by Richard Matheson...13 stories, 50¢. Monarch: THE WORLD GRABBERS by Paul W Fairman...and it says here it was inspired by the Popular TV Program, ONE STEP BEYOND, but I'm darned certain I read it way back in the old FANTASTIC ADVENTURES so any inspiration must have been the reverse way round...I date it somewhere between '51 and '53...anyone in a position to check for me? From the same publisher, THE UNENDING NIGHT by George H Smith. Both these at 40¢ each. Back to Belmont for a Philip K Dick yarn, THE PENULTIMATE TRUTH at 50¢...everyone lives in cells under the ground, except for the military government who are up top fighting the war...or so the piped TV and radio shows...but the occasional underdweller gets dissatisfied and pops up to check...certain of the background used in this story resembles closely that which Dick uses in his latest Ace novel, CLANS OF THE ALPHABET ROOMS, but although this similarity of scenic props tends to make one look for a history parallel, there doesn't appear to be one.

Mag of Fantasy & SF went up to 50¢ with its January issue (due out on 31st Dec in UK) and the price in Britain will be upped to 3/6, which is comparable. Thorpe & Porter have released the Feb '64 WORLDS OF TOMORROW, and the May '64 IF at 2/- each, and GALAXY April '64 at 3/6. They have also down for release in January '65 Kate Wilhelm's THE MILE-LONG SPACESHIP, Algis Budrys' THE FALLING TORCH, Arthur C Clarke's REACH FOR TOMORROW, E. Beam Piper's THE OTHER HUMAN RACE (sequel to LITTLE FUZZY), and Anderson & Kurland's TEN YEARS TO DOOMSDAY. In fact, some of these are already on sale in their news-stand outlets; but if you sit on the bookselling distribution circuit - well - I'm keeping my fingers crossed. Oh, I missed one - a new distribution of WAY OUT edited by Ivan Howard is also listed.

NEW WORLDS and SCIENCE FANTASY are going monthly. And

Herbert Jenkins will publish Mike Moorcock's second 'Elric' book in February...this will be the last four yarns in the series, with (I believe) some amendments to make the connection smoother...it will have a dust-wrapper by Jim Cawthorn, and will cost 12/6. Harry Harrison's THE ETHICAL ENGINEER is out from Gollancz, and although the ending is the same, it is considerably less abrupt than in the serial version. Much less of 'the marines have landed', and much more of the hero's individual activity in the city...umpteenth pages more after he penetrates to the electric generator...makes much better reading...and Harry has a collection scheduled for publication around next Easter and as he'll be Guest of Honour at the BrunCon, then will be your chance to an autographed copy.

Back to Tarzan...more or less...Ballantine have issued an 'authorised' pb of THE LAD AND THE LION at 50¢...this does not bear a special number in a Burroughs series, I note.

Macabre and weird fiction, etc., fans have two items they can note...one is the publication in December of the first issue of INSIGHT...a magazine for devotees of the macabre...price 1/-, quarto size, 16pp, and it contains film-stills, book and film reviews, articles, 'short lives' and other items by and about books, films and people in that borderland world of shadowed fantasy...the other item is the publication of a new Dennis Wheatley 'black magic' novel at 21/-...this is a 'Gregory Sallust' novel, based (historically) on the Second World War...a quick scan leads me to the opinion that the detail of the 'black magic' part is as excellent as in the first two of the stories in this field.

Corgi Books have now published NEW WRITINGS IN SF 1 edited by John Carnell, and the Bantam edition of Asimov's PEBBLE IN THE SKY is also available from Transworld at 3/6.

And regretfully, that will have to be all. This has been almost entirely about books...and then I find I have only covered about a third of the titles I've noted to mention...and very, very little of the notes I've made have been included. But just one plea...I find it impossible to keep check on the material which gets published in various off-trail mags, such as ROGUE, PLAYBOY, and what-have-you. If you spot any fantasy yarns in any non-fantasy mags, a postcard will be welcome. You may not get direct thanks, but I'll put in a good word for you with Klono and Cthulhu.

Happy New Year...KPS.

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W A N T E D Hardback editions of the following:-

- 1) SYNTHETIC MAN OF MARS - Edgar Rice Burroughs
- 2) FIGHTING MAN OF MARS - Edgar Rice Burroughs
- 3) SWORDS OF MARS - Edgar Rice Burroughs
- 4) THE LAST SPACESHIP - Murray Leinster
- 5) THE WORLD OF NULL-A - A E van Vogt
- 6) THE FATHS OF NULL-A - A E van Vogt

If any member has any of these titles, in hardback editions, that they wish to sell, or if they know where they can be obtained, please contact Mr R J Waskett, 35 St Marys Road, Ilford, Essex. Is prepared to pay good prices for reasonable editions.

NEW MEMBERS

- M 542 LILLINGTON I. (Miss) 60a Caversham Road, London NW 5.  
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 M 547 TYZACK C.F. Evenlode Cottage, Founds Hill, Charlbury, Oxon.  
 C 548 CCGIANO A. Via Nicastre 3, Rome, Italy.  
 M 549 STEDALL A.J. 22 Branch Road, Hainault, Ilford, Essex.  
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 A 553 RICHARDS R.C. 1 Lyndhurst Road, Ramsgate, Kent.  
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 M 563 FREEMAN C. Ward 3, Scotton Banks Hospital, Ripley Road, Knaresborough, Yorks.  
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 M 565 HAGGER J.M. 12 Wynnendale Road, South Woodford, London E 18.  
 M 566 WEST D. 49 Park Road, Bingley, Yorks.  
 M 567 HEDGE S.H.G. 26b Hamilton Terrace, London NW 8.  
 A 568 BELL H.R. 28 South Hill Road, Bensham, Gateshead 8, Co Durham.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- Alan Davies (M 394) now 14 London Street, Salford 5, Lancs.  
 Keith Freeman (M 28) now HQFTC Stats., RAF Shinfield Park, Reading,  
 Henry McGannity (M 452) now 17 South Mead, Poynton, Cheshire. Yorks.  
 Iain MacKenzie (A 477) now 12A Fairways, Dybe Road, Brighton 5, Sussex.  
 Daphne Sewell (M 415) now 6 Pingle Close, Whittlesey, Peterborough.

The membership now stands above the 300 mark and it is (I believe) the highest figure it has ever reached. In 1965, however, we hope to push the figure over the 400 mark. How about giving this a good start by renewing your membership? Last year, a new record was set up with only about 20 non-renewals. This year we hope everyone will rejoin.

# BOOKS

## Reviews and News

THE SYNDIC by C. M. Kornbluth

Published by FABER at 16/- . 221 ~~30000~~

This book has taken thirteen years to cross the Atlantic, but it was worth waiting for. We must thank Mr Edmund Crispin for bringing it to Faber's attention and for writing the analytical, yet kindly, introduction to this edition. THE SYNDIC is an old friend of mine since - longer ago than I like to remember - I purchased it for a serial in the original SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES which I was then editing. I have not read it again since that time so I opened it with a certain amount of trepidation: would it still be as good as I remembered?

I am happy to report to the membership that it is. This is vintage Kornbluth, perhaps a little knobby in spots, but still a volume written by a unique talent. The basic idea is an absolutely nutsy one, or kinky if you prefer the local term, a construction built upon an apparently impossible foundation. Yet Cyril easily and swiftly convinces the reader that the government of the United States could be taken over by the mobsters and the crime syndicate, the Syndic of the title. Once this assumption has been accepted we are treated to glimpses of this fascinating world and its supporting philosophy, a society interesting in its own right as well as for the observations it has to make on our present world.

That THE SYNDIC has a flaw can be based on the times and the customs when it was produced. SF was still struggling out of the pulp-age with its insistence upon continual action. I know it must sound like heresy on my part to say that there is too much action in a story, but this is unhappily true. After a few quick glimpses at this world of the future we are rushed across the Atlantic to Ireland (populated by savages and witches, do you hear that Jim White?) and into a breathless and slam-bang adventure. It is not a bad adventure, it can be found objectionable only in that it deprives us of more insight into the society of the Syndic.

But this is a minor quibble. The book belongs on everyone's shelf. Buy it and enjoy it, it is a treat you will never have again. Cyril Kornbluth is dead and we have all lost something. Those of us who knew him lost a good friend, a witty companion. The world at large lost one of the major science fiction writers who was

just beginning to show his strength, though he had been writing and selling since his early teens.

What wonderful, wonderful books they would have been, those books we'll never see.

Harry Harrison

THE UNCENSORED MAN by Arthur Sellings

Published by DCBSOHN at 16/- . 177 pages

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A patchy novel this, beginning with an excellent interlude expressing the self-doubt of a nuclear physicist, passing through a farcical and torpid morass and concluding with an unusually powerful ending.

Dr Mark Anders, an eminent nuclear weapons physicist, suffers from guilt feelings about his work - and who wouldn't. When he receives two messages - one in German from an epileptic moron and one in Greek as a computer's answer to a simple integration - he decides he is going off his rocker and goes to see a Polish psychiatrist he has met previously at a party.

When treated with L.S.D., Dr Anders vanishes - bodily - from the psychiatrist's couch, leading to the gradual extrapolation of a new Freudian theory concerning dimensions of existence and to the discovery of a new world.

The 'shocking indiscreetness' of a highly-secret Bomb worker visiting a Polish psychiatrist leads both of them into difficulties with security, etc.

When Mr Sellings tried introducing fantasy (in the form of psi) and equally tried to pass it off as scientifically as possible I began losing interest - in fact, if I hadn't had to review the thing, I'd have left it. But I persevered, and was rewarded with a rather hackneyed, but well-written, conclusion.

Anders, towards the end, begins to remind me of Dalroi of THE DARK MIND, and his predecessor, Gully Foyle of THE STARS MY DESTINATION.

To put it bluntly, unless you like psi stories, I don't recommend this. But Mr Sellings' future work should be interesting and of a high standard.

Graham Hall

THE WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION edited by Robert P Mills

Published by GOLLANCZ at 21/- .

337 pages

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This is one of the best anthologies I have read in a very long time. The excellent idea of asking authors to select their own favourite story has produced some interesting results, especially since each author writes his own introduction. Stories by Blish, Bradbury, Heinlein, Sturgeon, Anderson, and Asimov, plus ten others and an epilogue by Alfred Bester, fill the 337 pages of the book, and it is reassuring that only one author - John Collier - considers his best story lies back in the '40s; the rest originally appeared mainly in the '50s.

Inevitably, in such an anthology one meets old stories that have been reprinted once or twice before, but more than half of the collection was new to me. The stories themselves show not only that authors can select the better examples of their own work, but that in doing so they tend to choose less well-known, less original, better-written ones.

This anthology is highly recommended.

Charles Platt

THE ETHICAL ENGINEER by Harry Harrison

Published by GOLLANCE at 15/-. 176 pages

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For sheer good fun and entertainment, this book is hard to beat. The story line is comparatively slight, but the way it's handled by the writer raises it above the ordinary adventure and skullduggery yarn, although the story has plenty of both. Between bouts of interesting and profound ethical mud slinging, the tale spans along at a never-flagging pace.

The book is good, not only for the direct, economical style in which it is written, but also for some of the ideas that it contains.

The main characters are both likeable - and believable. Jason diAlt has a solution for everything and the happy knack of not antagonising too many people by his resourcefulness. His adventures are tinged with a nicely balanced humour, mostly at the expense of the engineer of the title, Mikah Samon. This unhappy character is the kind of person we have all met at sometime or other: they're so confounded by their own code of ethics that they never learn by experience. Likewise with Mr Samon, who, throughout the story, succeeds in putting quite a few spokes in Jason's wheel, but never quite manages to stop it.

Jason gets into more pickles than an onion, starting with his abduction by Mikah. Ethics compel Samon to take Jason, a gambler, back to face trial on Cassylia, whose casinos are a few million credits the poorer since his previous visit. Jason manages to disable the ship and it crash-lands in the ocean of an unknown planet. Our ethical friend saves Jason from drowning - in order to have the pleasure of seeing him swing back on Cassylia.

The two men are captured by a succession of loveable people, who cause them to exercise their respective talents. Fires follow frying pans with hilarious regularity and Jason contrives to start a good-going war, with techniques and weapons the locals had never dreamed about.

It was a pity that Mikah met a most unethical end. Another clash between this pair would have been very tasty.

How about it Harry? - a touch of the resurrections.....

Don Malcolm

INTRODUCING SF edited by Brian W Aldiss

Published by FABER at 10/-. 216 pages

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The aim of this anthology is to appeal both to the seasoned SF fan and to "the large body of ordinary readers who may be interested in the idea of science fiction but don't know where to begin."

This well-produced book starts off with an introductory essay by Brian W Aldiss. There are twelve very good stories, a four page Glossary of science fiction terms, and finally there is a list of recommended books in the genre. The dust jacket, designed by Bridget Riley, is both impressive and austere.

The stories are:-

"The Edge of the Sea"	by	Algis Budrys
"Trouble With Time"	by	Arthur C Clarke
"Time in Advance"	by	William Tenn
"Arena"	by	Fredric Brown
"Gesture of Farewell"	by	Brian W Aldiss
"The Immortal Bard"	by	Isaac Asimov
"The Cave"	by	F Schuyler Miller
"A Start in Life"	by	Arthur Sellings
"The Happy Man"	by	Gerald W Page
"I Made You"	by	Walter M Miller Jr
"It's a GOOD Life"	by	Jerome Bixby
"The Garden of Time"	by	J G Ballard

Of these, the best, in my opinion, is "The Cave". The setting of this longish story is a cave on Mars. It is cold and dark. Outside the storm is raging. Inside a number of animals are sheltering. Although these creatures are of different levels of culture and intelligence, there is peace among them. They are united, for the time being, against their common enemy, the destructive elements. Then into this cave comes an Earthman - driven, like the others, to take shelter until the storm is over. The vital question is - will the newcomer join the common truce, or will he disrupt it and therefore be considered part of the forces of destruction?

The new reader of this introductory SF anthology - the potential fan - is told the names of notable publishers and purveyors of SF. But nowhere is there a mention of that notable body of enthusiasts, the BSFA.

Bill Webb

DIVIDE AND RULE by L Sprague de Camp

Published by LANCER at 50¢. 160 pages

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This book also contains "The Stolen Dormouse" by the same author. Both stories are described as 'wacky' and 'hilarious'. From the point of view of humour, I found them only mildly amusing.

In the title story, the Earth's population has been reduced to a system of neo-feudalism by the 'hoppers', extra-terrestrial conquerors who resemble kangaroos. The author's

attention to detail is precise, meticulous and consistent, resulting in a clear picture of old-English feudalism superimposed on a modern American background. This certainly appeals to one's love of the ludicrous, and a neat 'marriage' is effected between ancient and modern - suits of armour being named after present-day car firms, for instance - Packard, Ford, Chrysler, etc.

An underground organisation which has secretly been plotting revolt against the hoppers for many years finally discovers a method by which the rulers may be overthrown. To divulge details of this method would give away much of the plot - but it obviously holds endless possibilities of a really funny penultimate chapter. To my surprise and disappointment, the author chooses to neglect this opportunity entirely. From then on, as far as I'm concerned, the story falls flat on its face and peters out in a boringly conventional clinch. The description of the 'mopping-up' operation is quite good, but on the whole the verdict is: well-written but disappointing.

"The Stolen Dornouse" is also a story of revolt, though not against aliens this time. Most of the elements of this story have been incorporated in other, better yarns, and I feel that this one would have benefited from some extension, thus presenting a clearer delineation of the status quo and its eventual overthrow.

Giant companies and combines have virtually taken over the rule of America, and Big Business is king - except in one particular state, the inhabitants of which are stubbornly determined to pursue their own, more leisurely way of life. From the geographical angle, they are ideally situated to resist all attempts to convert them to the produce-and-consume system obtaining elsewhere. The virtual impossibility of one state finally overcoming the other 49 is resolved by the fact that the rebel state has discovered a new source of power - and the last of the world's coal-fields is fast nearing exhaustion.....

The author tosses in hints about this new source of power, as well as others of a purely scientific nature - but they are only hints, leaving the reader vaguely dissatisfied.

If "The Stolen Dornouse" is ever extended to a full-length novel, I think I'd like to read it again. As it stands, however, my verdict is that it tends to be of the same character as "Divide and Rule".

Beryl Henley

### BRITISH SF MAGAZINES - Reviewed by Graham Hall

#### NEW WORLDS SF 146

With this issue, edited by Moorcock with 'assistance' from Langdon Jones, NEW WORLDS announces that it is going monthly, along with its stable-mate SCIENCE FANTASY.

Good news it is, too, for this issue is definitely the best to come from Moorcock, and it shows definite signs of settling down to something well worthwhile.

Featured item is THE POWER OF Y, the first half of a serial by Arthur Sellings. Mr Sellings has been increasing his

stature in the SF field in leaps and bounds recently, and this novel seems likely to ensure his further progression towards the top. It concerns an art-dealer, Max Afford, who discovers that, through a unique but minor psi power, he can distinguish original paintings from their 'Plied' copies. Transdimensional Multiplying is a newly-invented method of copying exactly by taking a slice out of the fourth dimension.

However, Afford discovers a fact that is world-shaking in its significance, and the episode closes with him in hiding from unknown pursuers.

Bob Parkinson (one of the well-known Cheltenham SF Circle fen who went north to Nottingham to fool around in ballistics or some such) makes his pro debut in this issue with "The Sailor in the Western Stars". Quite well-written but occasionally over-poetic, Parkinson reminded me extremely of Cordwainer Smith in "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul" - to a large extent in both style and idea.

Joseph Green contributes another good piece of first-rate 'old guard' SF, "Tunnel of Love", concerning two young money-hunters who go to a heavenly planet to study extraterrestrial ethnology - ostensibly, although their real mission is to film the planet's naked inhabitants for 'art' showings on Earth. The plot develops well, and it is a pleasant change to find a really readable SF tale in these days of so much experimental writing.

David Rome is present with a rather unsatisfactory but unusual story - "There's a Starman in Ward 7". It describes what would happen to an extraterrestrial if he landed on Earth.....

Another NEW WORLDS writer, Thom Keyes, perpetrates a parsley gun in "Election Campaign". The story stands on its own merits as a story, despite similarities to other, more well-known pieces.

Overall, the issue shows progress over any of the later ones, and Jim Cawthorn is present with a few good illustrations. The cover, attributed to no-one, is the best I've seen for several years - eye-catching and pleasing. Altogether it shows hope for British SF magazines.

### SCIENCE FANTASY 69

For the first time in its life, SCIENCE FANTASY will, henceforth, be monthly. - More good news for British SF. This issue, the last bi-monthly, is somewhat disappointing in that the reproduction is not up to that of previous issues.

The glossy cover has a striking design by Keith Roberts and the general external effect of the magazine renders it more like a paperback book than ever.

The line-up contains three new authors, two of whom show considerable promise. Langdon Jones is also present with his third published story, "The Empathy Machine".

"Present From the Past" by Douglas Davis is a time-safari piece, slightly overwritten in parts, but otherwise more entertaining than most tales. Kyril Bonfiglioli says in his editorial that this is one of his favourite science fiction topics. One can imagine a sudden flood of time-safari stories at 18 Norham Gardens.

"The Empathy Machine" by Langdon Jones is another of his

science-love stories. Lang makes up for a certain deficiency in writing skill - one which should be ironed out with practice - by having a vivid, pictorial and precise descriptive style. In this, as in his well-known "I Remember, Anita", one wonders why the science background is inserted when, if anything, it detracts from his study of human emotions. I feel that perhaps he knows little but the SF field and would rather force his stories to suit that genre than branch out into mainstream fiction. He certainly has the skill to do so. SF's loss would be mainstream's gain.

"Harvest" by Johnny Byrne is almost unreadable in its experimental style - a pity, because the idea, as far as I could make out, was worthy of better treatment. Mr Byrne is trying too hard to make his stories original, and succeeding only in spoiling them.

"Petros" is the first story by Philip Wordley and, to my mind, the best of a good selection. An after-the-bomb religion story, it is told with a commendably easy narration and his characterisation is way above the average in SF. A good find, this, and I for one would like to see more from him.

"Flight of Fancy" is a vignette by Keith Roberts, and it isn't as good as most. Nothing more than a space-filler and it fills damn little space.

"Only the Best" by Patricia Hocknell (another debutante) has a rather hackneyed SF theme, but is again written with an ease one would expect only from a more experienced writer. With a better idea, the authoress may have been able to work up to average standing.

"The Island" by Roger Jones is written in an unusual style. On first contacting it, I thought it poor, but soon realised it had a compellingness not found in any other story in the book. A strange inexplicable tale which brought about an emotion in me with which I am not very familiar. The only thing it reminded me of was how I felt during the Cargo-sect episode in MONDO CANE. Another first-time first-class story.

"The Typewriter" by Alistair Bevan is an amusing piece, well-written and well worth reading. It would teach any budding author not to identify himself too closely with his hero...

This issue also contains the final episode of Thomas Burnett Swann's THE BLUE MONKEYS.

SCIENCE FANTASY still suffers from a lack of interior illos and a letter column or story rating. It must be hard for a newcomer to its ranks not being able to judge audience reaction.

All-in-all an improved issue which bodes well for the future - especially Mr Wordley.

#### AMERICAN BOOK RELEASES

A FOR MICROBEA - F Boyle and J Elliot (Crest 50¢)

ASSIGNMENT IN ETERNITY - Robert A Heinlein (Signet 50¢) - This edition contains "Gulf", "Lost Legacy", "Jerry Was a Man" and "Blowdown".

GRAND NEW WORLDS - Ray Cummings (Ace 40¢)

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COILS OF TIME/INTO THE ALTERNATE UNIVERSE - A Bertram Chandler  
 DAVE - Edgar Pangborn (Ballantine 75¢) (Ace 45¢)  
 DAY THE MACHINES STOPPED - Christopher Anvil (Monarch 40¢)  
 FIRST LENSMAN - Edward E Smith (Pyramid 50¢)  
 FIRST MEN IN THE MOON - H G Wells (Ballantine 50¢)  
 GREEKS BRINGING GIFTS - Murray Leinster (MacFadden 50¢)  
 INVADERS OF SPACE - Murray Leinster (Berkeley 50¢)  
 SATURDAY EVENING POST READER OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION - edited  
 by the editors of the Sat. Ev. Post (Popular Library 50¢)  
 RADIC PLANET - Ralph Milne Farley (Ace 40¢)  
 SECOND FOUNDATION - Isaac Asimov (Avon 50¢)  
 SUNBURST - Phyllis Gotlieb (Gold Medal 40¢)  
 UNEARTH PEOPLE - Kris Neville (Belmont 50¢)  
 UNIVERSE AGAINST HER - James H Schmitz (Ace 40¢)

### BRITISH BOOK RELEASES

CONSIDER HER THIS - John Wyndham (Penguin 3/6 - Feb)  
 THE SILENT SPEAKERS - Arthur Sellings (Panther 2/6 - Jan)  
 THE BARTH WAR - Mack Reynolds (Four Square 3/6 - Feb)  
 PROPELLOR ISLAND - Jules Verne (Panther 3/6 - Jan)  
 THE SECRET OF WILHELM STORITZ - Jules Verne (Panther 3/6 - Jan)  
 OUT OF CHAOS - J T McIntosh (Digit 2/6 - Jan)  
 THE TIME MACHINE - H G Wells (Pan 2/6 - Feb)  
 THE FALLING TORCH - Algis Budrys (Pyramid: T&P import 2/6 - Jan)  
 THE MILE LONG SPACESHIP - Kate Wilhelm (Berkeley: T&P imp 3/6 - Jan)  
 REACH FOR TOMORROW - Arthur C Clarke (Ballantine: T&P imp 3/6 - Jan)  
 TEN YEARS TO DOOMSDAY - Chester Anderson & Michael Kurland  
 (Pyramid: T&P import 3/6 - Jan)  
 THE OTHER HUMAN RACE - H Beam Piper (another "Fuzzy" story) (Avon:  
 T&P imp 3/6 - Jan)  
 WAY OUT - edited by Ivan Howard (Belmont: T&P imp 3/6 - Jan)  
 TWO TALES AND 3 TOMORROWS - Harry Harrison (Gollancz 15/- - Easter)  
 THE THIRST BUNCHERS - Rick Raphael (Gollancz 15/-)  
 THE JOYOUS INVASIONS - Theodore Sturgeon (Gollancz 15/-) - this  
 contains "To Harry Medusa", "The Comedian's Children", "The  
 (Widget), the (Widget) and Boff".

### MAGAZINE NEWS

GALAXY Dec '64 (price 50¢) contains short novel by Harry Harrison  
 entitled "The Starsloggers"...also two novellettes, "A Man of  
 Renaissance" by Wynnau Guin and "To Avenge Man" by Lester del Rey.  
 February issue contains Cordwainer Smith, J T McIntosh, J H Schmitz,  
 and a new book review column by Algis Budrys.  
FANTASY & SF January '65 contains Chad Oliver's "End of the Line"  
 and Fritz Leiber's "Four Ghosts in Hamlet".  
 February issue contains Poul Anderson's "Marcue and Reprisal".

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ARCHIE MERCER, 70 Worrall Road,  
Bristol 6.



I like Terry's heading for my article, whatever it may or may not have to do with SF....

Dave Busby's article I found excellent. I strongly suspect that few, if any, readers will be able to pick any serious holes in his main theme, but like myself, will have to be content with throwing up a few instances of characterisation that haven't been covered. Heinlein has produced some excellent character studies in his time - not always of the principal characters in his stories by any means. Jubal Harshaw, in *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND*, strikes me as an entirely credible and likeable individual, for instance. (One

gathers that he is in fact mainly an idealisation of what Heinlein himself would like to be - but however he was constructed, he lives.) Then the narratrix of "The Man Who Travelled in Elephants" and his wife. I would point out that the latter two works are both short stories, at that.

Re "For Your Information", I have always suspected the *SCIENCE FANTASY* story of a few years back, bylined 'H J Murdoch' and entitled "This Precious Stone", to be of the full McIntosh blood.

I commend the extensive review-coverage given to recent books, and am particularly intrigued by the end of Don Malcolm's review on P 37. Is he trying to admit that he's GREEN HENRY, by any chance???? The mind (as the saying says) boggles.

As to the vexed question of what a reviewer should do, my own opinion is simple: he should tell me, the potential reader, whether or not I can reasonably expect to enjoy the work under review. Anybody wishing to indulge in a coruscating critical analysis should preferably do it later on, after I've had a chance to read the thing myself (if I want to) so that I'll know what he's talking about.

/ Yes, Archie, Jubal Harshaw is one character that stands out above the mass, in my opinion; although I can not recall the others. Another 'living' character was Baslin the Cripple in *CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY*, who, like Harshaw, was based on Heinlein himself. For me, though, the best character of all the books I've read was Isherwood Williams from *BARTH ABIDES*. He, like a lot of people, had great ideas for building up a new, clean world but never got round to getting the things done. - RGE /

GRAHAM M HALL  
57 Church Street  
Tewkesbury  
Gloucs.

VECTOR received. Improving all the time.  
For once I can wholeheartedly praise Your  
choice of cover and layout. I didn't know  
Busby could draw as well as write.

So you've doubled my sub? I'm thinking  
you may be losing me then. Still, I'll see  
how things go. It seems a pity to me that, as soon as the member-  
ship seemed so certainly on the increase, you have to stick up  
charges like that. Still, I suppose you know what you are doing.

These photos are among the best I've ever seen reproduced.  
If not the best. Pity that equally good photos could not have been  
taken of the RepeterCon.

/The photos in VECTOR 26 were reproduced by electro-stencil; those  
in VECTOR 29 by offset litho. The cost of the latter being about  
five times more expensive. It is hoped to have more offset litho  
work in future VECTORS - but this costs money. The increased subs  
will pay for this. They will also pay to bring out more publications  
like TANGENT. Also coming in the near future will be the AUTHENTIC  
checklist and the second part of the GALAXY checklist to cover the  
period 1959 - 1964. Anyway, now that you've seen TANGENT and know  
what else to expect, we hope you'll change your mind about leaving  
the Association. - RGP/

ROJIE GILBERT  
"Kimberley"  
Four Mile Bridge  
Nr Holyhead  
Anglesey

I present a short summary of the "Peristyle  
Problem" which I consider to be a stimulating  
field of research, only somewhat dead-ended:  
even if we do discover who he is, what will it  
profit us? A new one will be found, anyway.

First, let's narrow the field. It's un-  
likely to be anyone not mentioned in VECTOR,  
for two reasons: no-one could be so cruel as to do that, giving us  
no clue at all to his identity; and secondly, the Doc obviously is  
mad keen on SF and could not resist the temptation to write letters  
of comment to VECTOR, maybe even contribute in other ways. So, we  
may as well assume that his name appears in VECTOR. /Sounds  
reasonable, so far. Carry on - but I warn you: I won't tell you  
even if you are correct!! As you said, it's rather dead-ended. We  
could keep finding new Docs - something like Poul Anderson's JIM-MAN  
- RGP/.

Let's knock out some names: it's not Jim Groves 'cause he  
said so (he seems to be a truthful fellow) /seems? - RGP/, it's not  
Charlie Winstone, cause he told me so /and you believed him? - RGP/  
and it's not Ken Slater as there is no comparison between the  
articles on styles of writing /maybe Ken uses punctuation in the one  
and not in the other in order to disguise the style? - RGP/. This  
raises another point, by the way: however much the Doc tries to hide  
his own style, something of the man ("the style is the man") must  
show through (any good stylistic analysts in the BSFA?). /Who said  
that the Doc was male? - RGP/

Archie Mercer seems to be a fair proposition. That wee  
beastie beneath his name in "Marquartstein Equilateral" bears a  
remarkable resemblance to the Doc (or is it vice-versa?). But also  
consider that Archie collaborated with Phil Harbottle on "Lagic

Moments in SF No 5". In that one, you will notice the use of the word 'pedantic', which describes the Doc quite adequately. Maybe it's Phil, who, keeping quiet, is allowing Archie to take the blame. Finally, on this subject, Graham Hall seems strangely concerned about Doc's identity. He's asked Jim Groves and Doc himself but that got him nowhere /naturally!!! - RGF /--maybe these are all elaborate hoaxes arranged for our benefit because Graham is the Doc. Personally, I doubt it.

/ Well, the ranks of Doc Peristyle's are growing. I find this guessing really amusing since I know who the real Doc is. I suppose you do too, Doc. - RGF /

DONALD MALCOLM  
42 Garry Drive  
Paisley  
Renfrewshire

VECTOR 29 proves that we all have our own opinions, which seem, to us, the right ones. This is something that the music hall act of Platt, Busby and Latto should remember.

The pompous Professor Platt has invented the Charlie Plan for book reviews; Busby, not to be outdone, has come up with a gadget for seeing inside writers' minds, while Latto is mortified to discover that he's not the only one to have a little silver propeller on his head.

Before demolishing this lot, a word to Graham Hall. How could you mention me in the same line as "Dear Sir" Moorcock? About Ballard: I'm glad you left yourself an out with the phrase "appears to worship...." You didn't look at my review objectively, but in the light of your opinion of him, Ballard has turned out some absolute codswallop - "Terminal Beach" being the supreme example; but he's also written some good stories. I don't judge him, or any writer, on supposed reputation, hysterical adulation or ballyhoo, but on individual stories. If he's bad, I knock him and if he's good, I praise him. This is fair. I won't reject an anthology simply because some of the contents aren't to my liking. In my opinion (hereinafter 'IMO') the book was worth reading.

Incidentally, Graman, supernovae, are bright while they last, but they don't last long. Possibly Ballard has found that tripe such as "Terminal Beach" doesn't endear him to the wider readership. Most of the stories in TB could have fitted in anywhere and be understood. I think he'll shed some of his lustre and remain a very good writer. I agree with your Burroughs comment.

Let's have the Pompous Professor served up on the first charger. Now, Charlie, you've fallen into the obvious trap - if I may borrow your beautifully coined phrase - of thinking that book reviewing is an exact science. H.C, my preliminary remarks to the Ballard review were sufficient. Charlie, you are a lulu. If you couldn't understand something, would you feel justified in trying to pass critical comment? Are you one of those unfortunate people, Charlie, who need someone else to make up their minds for them? What use is my personal opinion, which, like all other personal opinions, is unique? I give the gist of the story - you make up your own mind. That's the most elementary advice, Charlie. I'm reviewing for everyone, not just you. Your "I, Charlie" attitude marks you as plain contrary. Your comments about V21 cover and Jack

Vance bear me out. (H.G. of course, Charlie).

Now for the man with the bee in his Busby. You're entitled to your own opinion about my stories. No argument there. As for not climbing down - man, you've had the ground cut away from under you, which means that you can add levitation to your talents. Use some of that clear common sense of yours to fix this in your head: three of the stories had no aliens. How can they be first contact when there was no contact? The others were not, by implication or definition, first contact stories. I wrote 'em, so I have inside information. Try reading what is written, not what you think - or would like - to be written. As the Editor commented, you certainly have been reading hidden meanings into my remarks. More of this directly.

"I fail to see how anyone cannot fail to be irritated by such chilling terms as..." What you fail to see is why everybody doesn't think like Busby. No doubt, by means of your patented peeper, you are able to talk for everyone else. You and the inventor of the wee silver propellor should get together and launch a crusade to bring SF to the poor, down-trodden masses. See on. Would it be boorish of me to remind you that it was your own stupid remark, "interesting maybe, to the SF reader..." that left you wide open for an irrefutable refutation from me.....you'll be blaming me for this, too, probably. If I'm a 'poor man' (such a delightfully original phrase!) - then I'm a bright poor man. Bright enough not to dig a hole and pull it on top of myself. Your remark that I was "jealous or something" is laughable and reveals you as neither adult nor intelligent. You're not worth starting an argument with. As for being incapable of saying something polite, you're not even capable of saying something impolite and making a good job of it! If you want to insult me, go ahead. But don't be so mealy-mouthed about it, Dave.

You and Ivor Latta seem to be afraid that you'll step on someone's toes. I'm neither a Boy Scout nor a minister. Ivor's old maidish "dear, dear" and his brilliant repetition of the obvious shows that he hasn't the guts for meaty in-fighting. The pair of you should bow out. (Charlie, me darlin', I'm not forgetting you, but at least you have a healthy nasty streak in you.)

I write for people who, I assume, are primarily interested in SF. I have no contempt for readers of mainstream. In common with Dave, you are blinded by the 'image' of SF. What image? If SF has any image, it is a bad one: monsters, ray guns, scantily-clad girls in space helmets. That's fact, not opinion.

You two seem to think that everyone is gasping to be an SF reader. On the contrary, even the simplest SF is far above the heads of most people and no amount of nonsense about image will change that. You, Ivor, seem to want SF diluted to the Dan Dare level, so that it may be purveyed to the masses. If you do think that way, then I do say "Here's tae us, wha's like us." If you and Dave want to be the John Blooms of the SF picture, go ahead. See where selling cheap goods got him. He: those intelligent enough will reach our level. There's no reason to lower it.

Ivor: mainstream - everything from classical history to thrillers - has accounted for 75% of my reading to date this year. And, oddly enough, it included Winnie the Pooh...



They shall be entitled to all normal privileges of membership of the Association, including the right to vote at General Meetings and Referenda, and shall be eligible to serve on the Committee with the exception of the post of Treasurer who must be 21 or over."

The second part of this Clause remains the same. RGF

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MORE AMERICAN BOOK RELEASES

- BLIND SPOT - Austin Hall & Homer Flint (Ace 50¢)
- CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON - Philip K Dick (Ace 40¢)
- DUPLICATED MAN - James Blish and Robert V Lowndes (Airmont 40¢)
- GALACTIC PATROL - Edward E Smith (Pyramid 50¢)
- KILLING MACHINE - Jack Vance (Berkeley 50¢)
- MESSAGE FROM THE ECENE/THREE WORLDS OF FUTURITY - Margaret St Clair (Ace 45¢)
- PLANET OF THE APES - Pierre Boulle (Signet 50¢) - Published in Britain last year under the title MONKEY PLANET.
- ROGUE MOON - Algis Budrys (Gold Medal 45¢)
- SPACE, TIME AND CRIME - edited by Miriam Allen de Ford (Paperback Library 50¢)
- SWORDSMEN IN THE SKY - edited by Don Wollheim (Ace 40¢)
- UNENDING NIGHT - George H Smith (Monarch 40¢)
- WAY STATION - Clifford D Simak (McFadden 60¢)
- WHO FEARS THE DEVIL? - Manly Wade Wellman (Ballantine 50¢) - all of the 'John, the Wandering Ballad-singer' stories from FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION in one book.
- PLANET BUYER - Cordwainer Smith (Pyramid 50¢).

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Please send all questions for FOR YOUR INFORMATION direct to Jim Groves (29 Lathom Road, East Ham, London E 6) not to the editor. However, all questions for DR PERISTYLE'S COLUMN should be sent to the editor.

Artwork is still needed for VECTOR covers and I'd also like new headings for GENERAL CHATTERING, DOC PERISTYLE, and FOR YOUR INFORMATION. Anyone care to submit their designs?

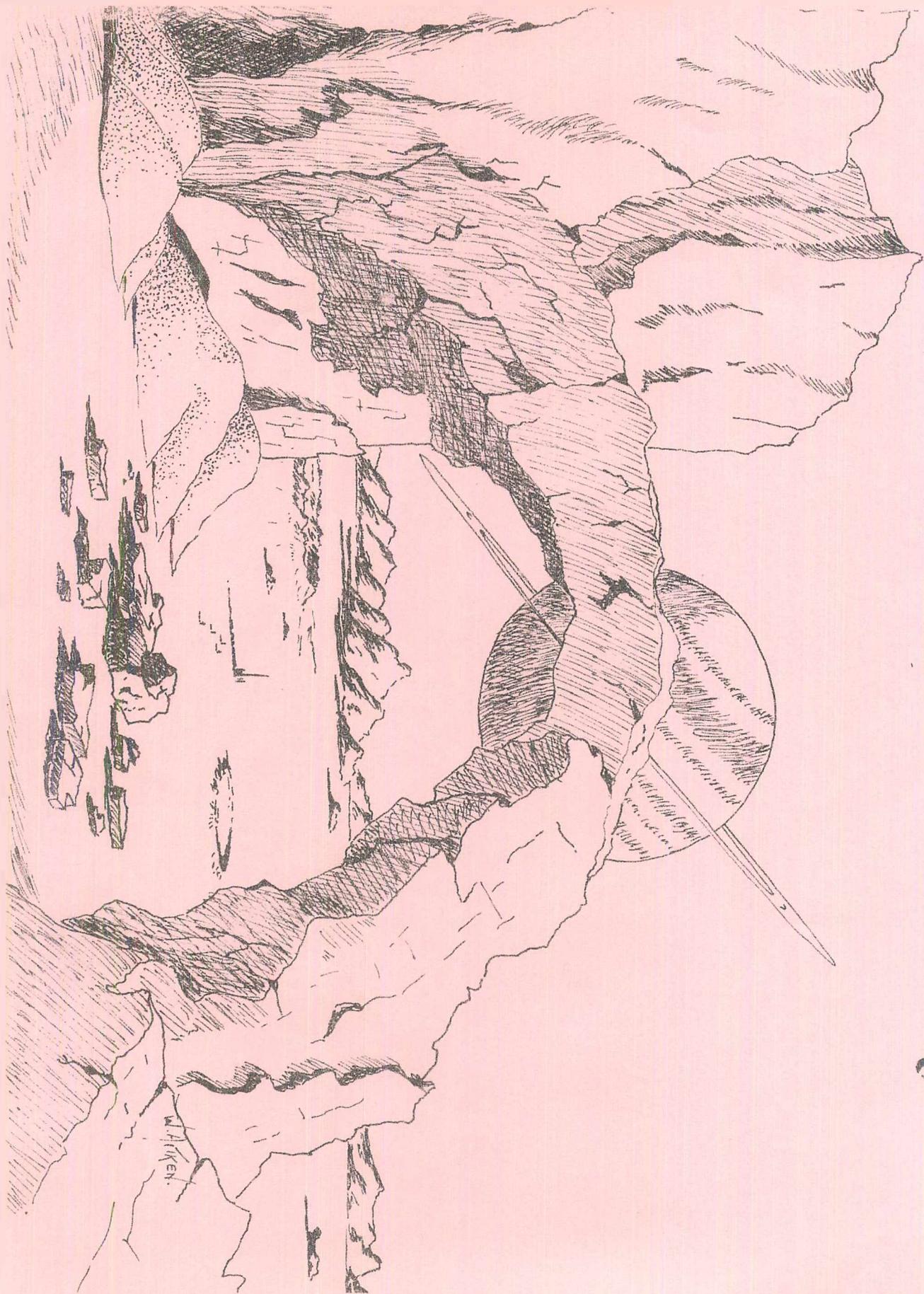
In future issues there will be articles by Terry Bull on Edmond Hamilton (VECTOR 31), Peter White on Ballard's TERMINAL BEACH (VECTOR 31) and Phil Harbottle on WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION (VECTOR 32).

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Have you any books, magazines, fanzines, original artwork, etc. that you don't want? The BrunCon Committee want anything of interest to SF fans for the Auction. If you have anything, just bundle it up and send to Rog Peyton, 77 Grayswood Park Road, Quinton, Birmingham 38.

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W. A. Ken.